3
LEVEL

# Hadith

## Prophetic Traditions

Obeikan Education

ENGLISH EDITION

# Hadith

## Prophetic Traditions

### Level 3

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Mob: +966 50 444 6432, Tel: +966 12 6929242
P.o. Box: 126371 Jeddah 21352
www.zadgroup.net

**Distribution**

KSA - Riyadh
King Fahd Road, Al-Olayia
Tel: +966 11 4808654, Fax: +966 11 4808095
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

# Preface

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, and upon all his family and Companions. To proceed:

Islamic knowledge is one of the most important necessities that the Muslim needs in his life; the entire ummah, in its efforts to rebuild Islamic civilization, is in need of it. Hence the religious texts point out the importance of Islamic knowledge and its bearers. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise}* [Aal Imran 3:18]. Ash-Shawkani رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: What is meant by those of knowledge here is the scholars of the Quran and Sunnah. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge"}* [Ta-Ha 20:114].

In the hadith it says: **«Whoever follows a path seeking knowledge thereby, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.»** Narrated by Muslim.

This series of textbooks comes to serve the community, with the aim of conveying Islamic knowledge by various methods and making it readily available to those who seek it. We hope that it will be another source of knowledge for academic programs and that it will be a support and help to those who want to acquire more Islamic knowledge and education, in an effort to achieve the main goal, which is to spread and instill sound Islamic knowledge on a sound academic foundation and in accordance with correct beliefs, based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in a modern and easily-understood style. We ask Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to grant us all beneficial knowledge, enable us to do righteous deeds, guide us and help us to be sincere in our efforts.

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The Zad
Academy Series

# Hadith
## Prophetic Traditions
Level 3

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# HADITH 1

It was narrated that an-Numan ibn Basheer رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: I heard the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say – and he put his fingers to his ears –: **«That which is halal is clear and that which is haram is clear, and between them are ambiguous matters which many people do not understand. Whoever guards against the ambiguous matters will protect his religious commitment from shortcomings and will protect his honour from slander, but whoever falls into that which is ambiguous will fall into that which is haram, like a shepherd who grazes his flock around reserved land; he will soon encroach upon it. Verily, every king has his reserved land and verily, the reserved land of Allah is that which He has forbidden. In the body there is a piece of flesh which, if it is sound, the entire body will be sound, but if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. Verily it is the heart.»**

Agreed upon.

## Narrator of the hadith

**An-Numan ibn Basheer, Abu Abdillah, al-Khazraji al-Ansari,** one of the most prominent of the Sahabah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and of the people of Madinah. He was the first child born among the Ansar after the Hijrah. He narrated from the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, from his maternal uncle Abdullah ibn Rawahah, and from Umar and Aisha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. He was appointed as the qadi (judge) of Damascus. He died in 65 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**"and he put his fingers to his ears"** means: he reached out his hands to take hold of his ears, to indicate that he is certain that he heard that.

**«Whoever guards against the ambiguous matters will protect his religious commitment from shortcomings and will protect his honour from slander»** – here the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained that one who guards against ambiguous matters protects his religious commitment from shortcomings, because the one who avoids ambiguous matters is more likely to avoid haram matters. According to a report narrated by al-Bukhari: **«Whoever refrains from that which he thinks might be sinful will refrain even more from that which is clearly haram.»** And he will protect his honour and reputation from people speaking ill of him.

**«like a shepherd who grazes his flock around reserved land; he will soon encroach upon it.»** The "reserved land" is land on which the people are prevented from grazing their flocks and hunting.

In other words, he is like a shepherd who grazes his flock around the reserved land that is green with plentiful vegetation; soon he will let his flock encroach upon it. Similarly, the Muslim must keep away from ambiguous matters that are close to the limit of prohibited matters that we are commanded to stay away from, because if he comes close to them, he will soon fall into them.

**«Verily, every king has his reserved land and verily, the reserved land of Allah is that which He has forbidden.»** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is the true Sovereign, and He has set up protection for Islamic laws with a strong and solid fence. Thus He has forbidden to people everything that may harm them in their religious or worldly affairs.

The heart is called qalb in Arabic because it quickly changes (taqallub). Hence one of the supplications that the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ most frequently recited was **«Yaa muqallib al-quloob, thabbit qalbi ala deenika (O Controller of the hearts, make my heart steadfast in Your religion).»** Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

This hadith refers to two important matters, namely: ensuring that deeds are sound and ensuring that what is in the heart is also sound.

These two matters are of immense importance, for rectifying one's actions and what is in the heart (intentions, motives, emotions and so on) will have the greatest impact and will be very effective in ensuring that people live their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

The scholars are agreed on the great significance of this hadith and the many lessons that may be learned from it; it is one of the hadiths that represent the core of Islam.

This hadith forms the basis of an important Islamic principle, which is: it is obligatory to bar the means that lead to haram things and to close every door that could lead to them. Thus it is haram to shake hands with women or be alone with a non-mahram woman, because that is a means that may lead to zina. Similarly, it is haram for an employee to accept gifts from customers or clients, so as to bar a means that may lead to bribery.

## What we learn from the hadith

**1** With regard to whether they are halal or haram, things may be divided into three categories:

- **a** That which is clearly halal
- **b** That which is clearly haram
- **c** That which is ambiguous

**This category includes that which may appear to be halal in some ways and haram in other ways, hence it is not clear to many people, and they are confused about the ruling concerning it.**

**2**

The fact that such ambiguous matters exist does not contradict what is stated in the religious texts about the religion being clear, such as the verses in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things}* [an-Nahl 16:89], *{Allah makes clear to you [His law], lest you go astray. And Allah is Knowing of all things}* [an-Nisa 4:176]. The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«I am leaving you on a clear path, the night of which is like its day. No one will drift away from it after I am gone except one who is doomed.»** Narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani. That is because confusion and ambiguity are not the result of an unclear text; rather it is a shortcoming on the part of the one who examines the text.

**3**

These ambiguous matters are clear to some scholars, but not to others. Hence Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ instructed us to ask the people of knowledge, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So ask those who have knowledge, if you do not know}* [an-Nahl 16:43]. That is because it is not possible for the ruling to be unclear to all the scholars.

**4** If the Muslim is confused about some matters, he should err on the side of caution and refer the matter to one whom he trusts in terms of his religious commitment, knowledge and honesty.

**5** But we are urged to keep away from ambiguous matters, provided there are reasons to indicate that something is unclear, otherwise it may be the matter of waswaas (compulsive intrusive thoughts) and being unduly cautious.

6

Ensuring that honour and reputation are upheld and maintained is something that is required according to Islamic teachings. So the individual should keep away from anything that may tarnish his honour and expose his reputation or that of his wife or children to malicious talk. In the Sunnah, it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to two men of the Ansar, when they saw him standing with his wife Safiyah رضي الله عنها at night and quickened their pace: **«Do not hurry; she is Safiyah.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

7

The most important thing, with regard to well-being and corruption, is the heart and what is in it. If the heart is sound, then the entire body will be sound, but if it is corrupt, then the entire body will be corrupt. There is no way to attain Paradise and blessings in this world and the Hereafter except through caring for the heart, rectifying it and making sure it is sound. Allah عز وجل says: *{The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children, but only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart}* [ash-Shu'ara 26:88-89].

Based on that, it is essential to pay more attention to what is in the heart than to physical actions, for hearts cannot be sound until knowledge of Allah and His might, love of Him, fear of Him and hope in Him become well entrenched in the heart. This is true Tawhid (affirmation of the oneness of Allah), in which the heart is totally subjugated to Allah, turning to Him, seeking Allah Alone with no partner or associate, and turning away from all others.

## Activities

1. **What do you understand from this phrase: "an-Numan put his fingers to his ears"? Are there any similar examples of gestures in the Sunnah?**
2. **Write an essay about the hadiths that represent the core of Islam.**
3. **How can you reconcile between the existence of ambiguous matters in Islam and the verse in which Allah عز وجل says:** *{And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things}* [an-Nahl 16:89]**?**
4. **How can you use this hadith to explain to people that they should ask questions of the scholars?**

# HADITH 2

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Whatever I have forbidden to you, avoid it, and whatever I have commanded you to do, do of it as much as you can, for those who came before you were only doomed because of their asking too many questions and their disobeying their prophets.»** Agreed upon.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Abu Hurayrah, Abd ar-Rahman ibn Sakhr ad-Dawsi,** the narrator of Islam. He stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ and narrated more than five thousand hadiths from him. Umar appointed him as governor of al-Bahrain, then dismissed him, and he was governor of Madinah for a few years during the Umayyad caliphate. He died in 59 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«Whatever I have forbidden to you»** – what is meant by forbidding is telling someone in a definitive manner to refrain from something.

**«avoid it»** that is, keep away from it, so that it will be on one side and you will be on the other side.

**«and whatever I have commanded you to do»** – commanding means telling someone to do something in a definitive manner.

**«do of it as much as you can»** that is, do of it as much as you are able to.

**«those who came before you»** – they include the Jews, the Christians and others, but what springs to mind is that this refers to the Jews and Christians.

**«and their disobeying their prophets»** that is, what doomed them was their lack of obedience and submission to their prophets.

This hadith indicates that whoever complies with what the Prophet ﷺ enjoined and refrains from what he forbade, and focuses on that, will be safe from doom and will attain salvation in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever goes against that and bases his affairs on his own thoughts and what he thinks is good will fall into what the Prophet ﷺ warned against, namely the attitude of the People of the Book, who were doomed because of asking too many questions and going against their prophets, and not submitting to and obeying their messengers.

## What we learn from the hadith

**1**

This hadith highlights the difference between things that are forbidden and things that are enjoined. With regard to things that are forbidden, the Prophet ﷺ said **«avoid it»**; he did not say "as much as you can." The reason for that is that prohibition requires one to refrain completely, and anyone can refrain, for refraining is easier than carrying out an instruction. As for things that are enjoined, they require making an effort, and a person may or may not be able to do that. Hence he said regarding what is enjoined, **«do of it as much as you can.»**

So if a person is not able to do what is required and obligatory in its entirety, let him do whatever he is able to. One example of that is that the Muslim is required to offer the obligatory prayer standing, but if he is not able to do that, he should offer the prayer sitting, and if he is not able to do that, then he may pray reclining.

**2**

The prohibition applies to a little or a lot of the thing that is prohibited, because you cannot be regarded as avoiding it unless you avoid it both to a lesser and greater degree. For example, we are forbidden to engage in riba (usury), which includes both a lesser or greater degree thereof, and we are forbidden to drink alcohol, which includes both a small amount and a large amount.

3

A prohibition usually comes in the form "Do not do [such and such]." Prohibitions, as is stated in the religious texts, may be divided into two categories:

**The first category** **is prohibitions indicating that something is haram** (forbidden). This applies to everything that Islam prohibits in the sense of obliging us not to do those things, such as the prohibition on drinking alcohol, zina (adultery), riba (usury), backbiting and spreading malicious gossip. An accountable person will be punished for doing these things and will be rewarded for refraining from them, in compliance with Islamic teachings.

**The second category** **is prohibitions indicating that something is makruh** (disliked). This applies to everything that Islam prohibits in the sense of stating that it is not appropriate to do these things, such as the prohibition on putting the hands on the hips, cracking the fingers and interlacing them whilst praying, and the prohibition on eating whilst reclining. There is no punishment for doing these things, but a person will be rewarded for refraining from them, in compliance with Islamic teachings.

4

It is not obligatory to do of something that is enjoined anything except what one is able to do.

A command may appear in various forms, the most common of which is "Do [such and such]." Commands, as is stated in the religious texts, may be divided into two categories:

**The first category** **is commands indicating that something is wajib** (obligatory). This applies to everything that Islam enjoins in the sense of obliging us to do these things, such as establishing prayer and giving zakat. The one who does them will be rewarded and the one who fails to do them may be punished.

**The second category** **is commands indicating that something is mustahabb** (encouraged). This applies to everything that Islam enjoins in the sense of recommending us to do these things, such as having witnesses to a transaction and praying istikharah. The one who does them will be rewarded, but the one who does not do them will not be punished.

In principle, what is mentioned in the form of a command is obligatory, and what is mentioned in the form of a prohibition is forbidden, unless there is evidence to prove otherwise.

5

The Israelites' asking too many questions of their prophets was the cause of their doom and of things being made difficult for them.

**You should understand that asking about matters of religion is of two types:**

**The first type** is praiseworthy. This refers to a person asking about what he needs to know. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So ask those who have knowledge, if you do not know}* [an-Nahl 16:43].

**The second type** is blameworthy. It includes:

asking about matters that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has hidden from His slaves and has kept the knowledge thereof to Himself;

asking by way of idleness, stubbornness and mockery, such as the questions that the disbelievers asked of the prophets, out of stubbornness and arrogance;

asking the scholars ambiguous questions, for the purpose of making them slip up and give wrong answers;

asking about things that rarely happen, concerning which there is no benefit in asking these questions.

6

There is a warning against disobeying and differing with the prophets, and what is required of the Muslim is to be in agreement with the prophets, and to believe that they are the best of people; Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ honoured them with the message, and the last of them was Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, whom Allah sent to all of humanity. His teachings are the religion of Islam which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has chosen for His slaves, and Allah will not accept any other religion from anyone. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam}*. [Aal Imran 3:19].

## Activities

1. In the hadith, there is a differentiation between commands and prohibitions. What is the reason for that?

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2. Write an essay about the causes of nations being doomed.

.....

.....

3. What advice would you give to someone who is asking about instructions in religious texts: does it mean that something is obligatory (wajib) or encouraged (mustahabb)?

.....

.....

4. What is meant by the prohibition on asking too many questions that is mentioned in the hadith, when Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has enjoined us to ask those who have knowledge?

.....

.....

## HADITH 3

It was narrated that Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said: I was (riding) behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one day when he said: **«O young lad, I am going to teach you some words: be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him with you. If you ask, ask of Allah, and if you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that if the entire nation were to come together to benefit you with something, they would not benefit you with anything except with something that Allah had already decreed for you. And if they were to come together to harm you with something, they would not harm you with anything except with something that Allah had already decreed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi, who said: This is a hasan sahih hadith.

### Narrator of the hadith

**Abdullah ibn Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib al-Hashimi,** the great scholar of the ummah and the interpreter of the Quran. He became Muslim when he was a boy and stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ. The caliphs respected him. He lost his sight at the end of his life. He used to teach people; he would allocate one day for fiqh, one day for tafsir, one day for maghazi [accounts of the Prophet's military campaigns], one day for poetry and one day for the history of the Arabs. He died in at-Taif in 68 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«be mindful of Allah»** – this is sublime and great advice. What is meant is: Be mindful of the limits set by Allah عز وجل and of His rights, His commands and His prohibitions, by adhering to and complying with His commands, and heeding His prohibitions, avoiding what He has forbidden, and adhering to His limits, so that you do not overstep the mark. Whoever does that is one of those who are mindful of the limits set by Allah, whom Allah praises in His Book, as He عز وجل says: *{[It will be said], "This is what you were promised - for every returner [to Allah] and keeper [of His covenant] who feared the Most Merciful unseen and came with a heart returning [in repentance]"}* [Qaf 50:32-33].

## Explanation of phrases

**«and He will protect you»** – He will protect you from ills in this world and the Hereafter.

This reciprocity between a person's being mindful of the limits of Allah and Allah protecting him has counterparts in other verses in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So remember Me; I will remember you}* [al-Baqarah 2:152], *{if you support Allah, He will support you}* [Muhammad 47:7].

**«Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him with you»** that is, you will find Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ with you; He will guide you to all that is good, bring you closer to Him and show you the path that leads to Him, and He will ward off all evil from you.

**«The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried»** that is, what Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has written and decreed is finished with; the pens have been lifted and the pages have dried, and there can be no change to the words of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

## Brief explanation of the hadith

This hadith forms the basis for being mindful of Allah, paying attention to Allah's rights, delegating one's affairs to Him, putting one's trust in Him, testifying to His oneness and worshipping Him Alone; and realizing that all creatures are helpless and need Him.

In this hadith, there is important advice from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as he advised us to adhere to the commands of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and avoid what He has forbidden, and he told us that Allah will protect the one who does that in all his actions, wherever he is, both in this world and the Hereafter. The individual should not refer his concerns and needs to anyone except Allah; rather he should seek the help of Allah, and put his trust in Him in all his affairs. Even if the people were all to come together and try, with their words and deeds, to bring him some benefit or ward off from him some harm, they would not be able to harm him or benefit him except with something that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has already written and decreed for him.

## What we learn from the hadith

1. The good attitude of the Prophet ﷺ, as he spoke gently to Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه when he said: **«O young lad, I am going to teach you some words.»**

2. Whoever is mindful of Allah, Allah will protect him, guide him and show him the way to what is good. One of the outcomes of Allah's protecting him is that He will ward off evil from him.

3. Whoever neglects the religion of Allah, Allah will abandon him and will not care for him. Allah عز وجل says: *{And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient}* [al-Hashr 59:19].

### One of the most important matters to be mindful of is prayer.

Allah عز وجل has enjoined us to adhere to prayer, as He says: *{Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer}* [al-Baqarah 2:238].

Another important matter that we must adhere to is purification, for it is the key to prayer. The Prophet ﷺ said: **«No one maintains his wudu except a believer.»** Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut.

Among the most important faculties that are to be guarded against that which Allah عز وجل has prohibited are the tongue and the private part. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Whoever guards what is between his jaws and what is between his legs will enter Paradise.»** Narrated and classed as sahih by al-Hakim.

**Allah's protection and care of His slave is of two types:**

**The first type** is His protection and care for him in his worldly affairs, such as protecting his health, his children, his family and his wealth.

**The second type,** which is more important, is Allah's protection and care of His slave in his religious commitment and faith. So He protects him during his lifetime from misleading specious arguments and from haram desires, and He protects his religious commitment at the time of his death, causing him to die as a believer.

**4**

People will never be able to benefit anyone unless Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has already decreed that for him, and they will never be able to harm anyone unless Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has already decreed that for him.

**5**

It is obligatory to worship Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ Alone. Whoever knows that no one can benefit or harm, give or withhold, except Allah, it is obligatory for him to fear Him Alone, put his hope in Him Alone, love Him Alone, ask of Him Alone, beseech Him Alone and call upon Him Alone; he should seek help only from Him. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, "Then have you considered what you invoke besides Allah? If Allah intended me harm, are they removers of His harm; or if He intended me mercy, are they withholders of His mercy?" Say, "Sufficient for me is Allah; upon Him [Alone] rely the [wise] reliers"}* [az-Zumar 39:38], *{Whatever Allah grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise}* [Fatir 35:2].

**6**

Everything is written; it has been decreed and decided. It is proven from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he said: **«Allah wrote the decrees concerning all of creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth.»** Narrated by Muslim.

It was narrated from Jabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«No one truly believes until he believes in the divine decree, both good and bad, and until he realizes that whatever befell him could not have missed him, and whatever missed him could not have befallen him.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

The poet Ubaydullah ibn Utbah said:

Be patient in accepting the inevitable decree, and be content with it
Even if what is written for you brings what you dislike
No man will have a time of ease
But it will be followed by a time of difficulty

## Activities

1. How does this hadith, which consists of a few lines, sum up what is elaborated upon in volumes of writings about human development?

.....

.....

2. In a few lines, explain how a person can protect his religious commitment, and how Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ protects and cares for His slave.

.....

.....

3. How does this hadith establish the Islamic principle of affirming the oneness of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and worshipping Him Alone (Tawhid)?

.....

.....

4. This hadith includes two important principles concerning the oneness of Allah (Tawhid); what are they?

.....

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# HADITH 4

It was narrated that Abu Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me: **«Be mindful of Allah wherever you are, and follow a bad deed with a good deed; it will erase it. And have a good attitude towards people.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi, who said: This is a sahih hasan hadith.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Abu Dharr Jundub ibn Junadah al-Ghifari,** the fourth – or the fifth – person to enter Islam. Abu Dharr came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he was in Makkah and became Muslim, then he went back to his people, and he used to mock their gods. Abu Dharr died in ar-Rabdhah in 32 AH, and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud offered the funeral prayer for him, along with some others who were present when he died.

## Explanation of phrases

**«Be mindful of Allah»** that is, be mindful of His punishment and take precautions against the punishment of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, by doing what He enjoins and avoiding what He forbids.

**Taqwa** (translated here as "being mindful of Allah"; it may also be translated as "fearing Allah") is what Allah enjoined upon the first and the last, as He عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to fear Allah}* [an-Nisa 4:131].

**«and follow a bad deed with a good deed; it will erase it»** that is, if you do a bad deed, then follow it with a good deed, and this good deed will erase the bad deed.

The scholars رَحِمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ differed as to whether what is meant by the good deed which will erase a bad deed is repentance alone, or does it mean any good or righteous deed?

**The correct view** is that good deeds erase bad deeds, even if that good deed is not repentance per se, such as prayer, fasting, giving charity, upholding ties of kinship, visiting a sick person, remembering Allah (dhikr), praying for forgiveness, and so on. That is because Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds}* [Hud 11:114].

**The word hasanah** (translated here as a good deed) is a comprehensive word which includes everything that brings one closer to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

**«Have a good attitude towards people.»** Having a good attitude means refraining from harming others, being generous to people, bearing the annoyance of others with patience, and showing a cheerful face.

This is a very important hadith, in which the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mentions together the rights of Allah and the rights of people.

The rights of Allah over His slaves are that they should be mindful of Him and fear Him as He should be feared, avoid what is prohibited, and do what is obligatory. This is what Allah enjoined upon the first and the last.

Moreover, because man will inevitably fall short in his duties towards Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ enjoined us to do that which will make up for shortcoming and erase bad deeds, which is to follow a bad deed with a good deed. Then he صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ enjoined us to interact with people with a good attitude, which is the second matter mentioned in the hadith. This means that you should refrain from causing them any kind of annoyance or harm, and you should overlook their annoyance and mistreatment of you. The best attitude is being forbearing and patient with people, not getting upset with them, and being cheerful and friendly towards them.

## What we learn from the hadith

1

**It is obligatory to be mindful of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and fear Him wherever you are.**

If your announcing and demonstrating your mindfulness of Allah will lead other people to emulate you and follow your example, then announcing it is better, but if announcing it will be of no benefit, then it is better to conceal it.

2

It is essential to seek forgiveness from sins and repent from them, and not to persist in them. In as-Sahihayn it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«A person committed a sin, then he said: O Lord, I have committed a sin, so forgive me. Allah said: 'My slave knows that he has a Lord Who forgives sins and punishes for sin. I have forgiven My slave.' Then he committed another sin… Until the fourth time, He said: 'Let him do whatever he wishes.'»**

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us in a description of those who are mindful of Him that they may sometimes commit major sins, but they seek forgiveness and do not persist in sin. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah ? - and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know}* [Aal Imran 3:135].

## There are many ways of expiating for sins, as mentioned in the religious texts. They include the following:

**Wudu.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Whoever does wudu and does it well, his sins will emerge from his body until they come out from beneath his fingernails.»** Narrated by Muslim.

**Prayer.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«What do you think, if there was a river at the door of one of you in which he bathed five times every day – would any trace of dirt remain on him?»** They said: No trace of dirt would be left on him. He said: **«That is the likeness of the five daily prayers; Allah erases sins by means of them.»** Agreed upon.

**Fasting.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven for him.»** Agreed upon.

**Umrah.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«From one umrah to the next is an expiation for whatever (sins) came in between them.»** Narrated by Muslim.

**Hajj.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Whoever performs pilgrimage to this House and does not have sexual relations (with his wife) or commit evil will emerge from his sins as on the day his mother bore him.»** Agreed upon.

**Giving charity.** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi.

3

**We learn of the grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to His slaves, as He causes good deeds to erase bad deeds.**

**Is it essential to intend when doing this good deed that it should erase the bad deed that one committed?**

**The apparent meaning of the hadith indicates no, and that simply doing good deeds erases bad deeds. This is by the grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to His slaves, and is one of the ways in which His mercy prevails over His wrath.**

**Do righteous deeds expiate both major and minor sins, or do they only expiate minor sins? Some of the scholars said that they expiate both major and minor sins, but the majority of scholars are of the view that they only expiate minor sins; as for major sins, it is essential to repent specifically from them.**

**We are encouraged to have a good attitude towards people,** because the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Have a good attitude towards people.»** And he ﷺ said: **«Allah is kind and loves kindness in all things.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

4

## Activities

1. **How can a person attain mindfulness of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in private and in public?**

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2. **Write a brief essay about the virtue of seeking forgiveness and its effect on a person in this world and the Hereafter.**

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3. **In the light of this hadith, speak about having a good attitude.**

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# HADITH 5

It was narrated that Sufyan ibn Abdillah ath-Thaqafi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: I said: O Messenger of Allah, Tell me of something in Islam that I will not ask anyone about after you. He said: **«Say: I believe in Allah, then remain steadfast.»** Narrated by Muslim.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Sufyan ibn Abdillah ibn Rabeeah ath-Thaqafi,** a Sahabi (Companion of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). He came to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in a delegation. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ appointed him in charge of the zakat of at-Taif. He narrated from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and from Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He was present at the Battle of Hunayn.

## Explanation of phrases

**«Say: I believe in Allah»** that is, understand and adhere to the word of Tawhid, the testimony that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and refrain from everything that is contrary to sound belief and perfect faith.

**«then remain steadfast»** that is, remain steadfast in obeying Allah. This is in accordance with the verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{So keep to the straight path as you have been commanded}* [Hud 11:112].

**Istiqamah** (translated here as keeping to the straight path) means being steadfast in following the straight path and the true religion, without deviating from it. It includes doing acts of worship and obedience, both visible and hidden, and refraining from what is prohibited.

Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, concerning the verse *{So keep to the straight path as you have been commanded}* [Hud 11:112]: There is no verse that was revealed to the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the entire Quran that was more difficult for him than this verse. Hence he صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to his Companions, when they said: Your hair is turning grey: **«(Surat) Hud and its sisters turned my hair grey.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said concerning the verse *{Verily, those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast}* [Fussilat 41:30]: They do not associate anything with Allah.

Associating others with Allah (shirk) is one of the gravest of sins that a person could commit against Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, his Lord and Creator. It means associating a rival with Allah in worship. It was narrated that Ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: I asked the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: Which sin is worst in the sight of Allah? He said: **«Associating a rival with Allah when He has created you.»** I said: That is indeed serious. I said, Then which? He said: **«Then killing your child for fear that he will eat with you.»** I said: Then which? He said: **«Then committing zina (adultery) with your neighbour's wife.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

Because of the gravity of the sin of shirk, Allah will never forgive it. He عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin}* [an-Nisa 4:48].

**Shirk includes:** Calling upon someone other than Allah; practising witchcraft; making vows to the awliya (close friends of Allah) and the righteous; seeking their help and drawing close to them on the grounds that they will intercede with Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

The greatest form of istiqamah (keeping to the straight path) is affirming the oneness of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, by believing that Allah Alone is deserving of worship of all types – which is the meaning of Laa ilaaha illa Allah (there is no god worthy of worship except Allah) – and thus striving sincerely for the sake of Allah Alone.

Al-Qadi Iyad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: This is an example of the concise speech of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

This hadith sums up all the teachings of Islam and faith. This man asked the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for a concise word that would guide him to goodness and help him to attain success, and the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed him to believe in Allah, which includes all the articles and principles of faith in which one is required to believe, as well as what is connected to that of deeds of the heart and submission to Allah both inwardly and outwardly, then persisting in that and remaining steadfast in it until death. This is similar to the verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah", then remain steadfast - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], "Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised"}* [Fussilat 41:30].

So being delivered from all troubles, and attaining Paradise and all that one aspires for, are connected to faith and keeping to the straight path.

## What we learn from the hadith

**1** We see how keen the Sahabah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were to seek knowledge, which is indicated by the questions that they asked the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

2

We see the mature thinking of this Sahabi رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, as he asked this extremely important question, which helped him have no need to ask anyone else.

3

The individual should ask concise and clear questions about knowledge, so that he will not become confused about different branches of knowledge.

4

The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was given the power of concise speech, as he summed up the entire religion in two phrases: **«Say: I believe in Allah, then remain steadfast.»** And we have noted above that the Quran testified to the same meaning.

**The individual should always check himself:** is he remaining steadfast or not? If he is remaining steadfast, then he should praise and thank Allah, and ask Him to keep him steadfast. If he is not remaining steadfast, then he should seek steadfastness and adjust his course towards Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

- One who delays his prayer until the time for it ends is not remaining steadfast.
- One who withholds zakat is not remaining steadfast.
- If he transgresses against people's honour, then he is not remaining steadfast.

If he deceives people and cheats them when buying and selling, or in rental contracts, and the like, then he is not remaining steadfast.

**Remaining steadfast is a general and comprehensive description that may apply to all actions. It is obligatory, not optional, as some people think. So it is essential to adhere steadfastly to the truth and guidance until death.**

## Activities

1. **Give examples of the concise speech of the Prophet ﷺ.**

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2. **In the hadith, we see the understanding of the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم in the kind of questions they asked. Explain that.**

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3. **Give some contemporary examples of failure to remain steadfast.**

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## HADITH 6

It was narrated that Sa'd ibn Hisham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: I went to Aisha and said: O Mother of the Believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She said: Do you not read the Quran? I said: Yes, of course. She said: The character of the Prophet of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the Quran. Narrated by Muslim

### Narrator of the hadith

**Aisha as-Siddeeqah bint Abi Bakr,** the Mother of the Believers, the wife of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the dearest of his wives to him and the most knowledgeable of Muslim women. She was well-versed in Islamic knowledge, and also in literature and poetry. The senior Sahabah used to refer to her concerning matters of religion. When Masruq narrated from her, he would say: as-Siddeeqah bint as-Siddeeq told me… She went out on the day of [the Battle of] the Camel to confront Ali رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, then she retracted, and Ali رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent her home with dignity and honour. She died in 58 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**Sa'd ibn Hisham رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ was a Tabiee who was held in high esteem.**

**"The character of the Prophet of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the Quran"** that is, because he acted in accordance with it, adhered to the limits it set, adopted the etiquette that it prescribed, reflected upon the likenesses and stories mentioned in it, and recited it well.

In this hadith, Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا explained that the character of the Prophet ﷺ was the Quran, so he would adhere to its etiquette, commands, prohibitions and beautiful teachings. What explains that is the fact that everything the Quran discusses of noble characteristics and good manners, which it encourages and urges people to adhere to, he himself ﷺ adhered to it, exemplified it, and reached the highest level therein. Everything that Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ forbade, the Prophet ﷺ never approached. Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And indeed, you are of a great moral character}* [al-Qalam 68:4].

## The virtue of having a good attitude:

The Prophet ﷺ was asked: Who are the most beloved of Allah's slaves to Him عَزَّ وَجَلَّ? He said: **«The best of them in attitude.»** Narrated by at-Tabarani; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

According to a report narrated by Ibn Hibban, the Prophet ﷺ was asked: What is the best thing that a person can be given? He said: **«A good attitude.»** Classed as sahih by al-Albani.

It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **«Shall I not tell you of the most beloved of you to me and those who will be seated closest to me on the Day of Resurrection?»** – He repeated it two or three times – They said: Yes, O Messenger of Allah. He said: **«The best of you in attitude.»** Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

And he ﷺ said: **«There is nothing that will weigh more heavily in the balance of the believer on the Day of Resurrection than a good attitude. Indeed Allah hates the foulmouthed person who speaks in an offensive manner. The one who has a good attitude will reach the level of the one who fasts and prays [a great deal].»** Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

## What we learn from the hadith

1

What Aisha رضي الله عنها meant when she said, "His character was the Quran" was similar to the meaning of the verses: *{Be gracious, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant}* [al-A'raf 7:199], *{Indeed, Allah enjoins justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded}* [an-Nahl 16:90], *{and be patient over what befalls you}* [Luqman 31:17], *{But pardon them and overlook [their misdeeds]}*, [al-Ma'idah 5:13], and similar verses which urge us to rid ourselves of blameworthy characteristics and to acquire praiseworthy characteristics.

Ibn Katheer said: What this means is that for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, following the Quran – both its commands and prohibitions – was second nature, and following the Quran took precedence over following his innate human nature. So whatever the Quran enjoined, he did it, and whatever it forbade, he refrained from it. This is in addition to what Allah created in him of noble characteristics such as hayaa (modesty), generosity, courage, tolerance, forbearance, and all other good characteristics.

**In the hadith, it indicates that one should attain a good attitude, and that good attitude should be with Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and with people.**

2

- Having a good attitude with Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ means being content with His religious rulings (regarding what is halal and haram, and so on) and with His will and decree (predestination), feeling at ease with that, not feeling discontent or impatient and not feeling sad or grieved; so one should praise and thank Allah for both trials and blessings, both privately and in public.
- Having a good attitude with people means refraining from harming them, being generous, and being cheerful when dealing with them.
  - It also means refraining from harming and annoying people either verbally or in one's physical actions.
  - Being generous means giving to people, whether that be wealth or knowledge, or helping them by means of your position and status, and so on.
  - Being cheerful when dealing with people means meeting them with a cheerful and friendly face.

## Activities

1. **Based on the answer that the Mother of the Believers Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا gave to the one who asked her about the character of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, discuss how this highlights the depth of her understanding of religion.**
2. **Give some examples from the Quran of characteristics that the Muslims should seek to acquire.**
3. **Write briefly about what is meant by a good attitude.**
4. **Speak about the need for those who call people to Allah (duaat) to adopt the characteristics and attitude of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.**

# HADITH 7

It was narrated from Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا, that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ narrated that his Lord عَزَّ وَجَلَّ said: **«Allah decreed good deeds and bad deeds. Then he explained that: So whoever decides to do a good deed but does not do it, Allah will record it for him with Him as one complete good deed. If he decides to do it and does it, Allah will record it for him with Him as ten good deeds (hasanat) up to seven hundred-fold, up to many times more than that. If he decides to do a bad deed but does not do it, Allah will record it for him with Him as one complete good deed. If he decides to do it and does it, Allah will record it for him as one bad deed.»** Agreed upon.

## Explanation of phrases

The word translated here as **«decreed»** is kataba (lit. wrote). That is, He decreed that these deeds should happen and He wrote down the reward and punishment for them.

**«decides»** that is, he resolves to do it, and is not merely thinking about doing it.

**«but does not do it»** that is, he does not do the good deed because of something that prevents him from doing it, or he does not do the bad deed, out of fear of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

**«complete»** that is, he will be rewarded for it, even if he did not actually do it and only decided and intended to do it.

In this hadith, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ states that Allah decreed good deeds and bad deeds, and His decreeing of good deeds and bad deeds means two things:

**Firstly,** it means that He wrote that in His prior decree, which means that it is written in al-Lawh al-Mahfuz (the Preserved Tablet), as He عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And every small and great [thing] is inscribed}* [al-Qamar 54:53].

**Secondly,** it means that He writes it in the sense of recording the deed. So when a person does the deed, it is recorded for him according to what is dictated by wisdom, justice and the virtue of the deed.

Then the Prophet ﷺ explained that: if a person decides to do a good deed but does not do it, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ records it as one complete good deed. If he does it, Allah records for it ten hasanat (rewards for good deeds), up to seven hundredfold, up to many times more.

This variation depends on one's level of sincerity and adherence to the Sunnah. The more a person is sincere towards Allah in his worship, the greater his reward will be, and the more closely he follows the example of the Prophet ﷺ in his worship, the more perfect his worship will be, and the greater its reward will be.

With regard to bad deeds, he said: **«If he decides to do a bad deed but does not do it, Allah will record it for him with Him as one complete good deed.»** For example, if a man decides to steal something, then he remembers Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and is overwhelmed by fear of Allah, so he refrains from stealing, one complete good deed will be recorded for him as a result of that, because he refrained from doing an act of disobedience towards Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, so he will be rewarded for that.

If he goes ahead and does the bad deed, it will be recorded for him as one bad deed, and no more than that, because Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgement] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit], and whoever comes with an evil deed will not be recompensed except the like thereof; and they will not be wronged}* [al-An'am 6:160].

## Multiplication of the reward for good deeds

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan so He may multiply it for him many times over?}* [al-Baqarah 2:245], *{Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgement] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit]}* [al-An'am 6:160].

Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawud narrated – and the report was classed as sahih by al-Albani – that Abdullah ibn Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«There are two characteristics which no Muslim man acquires but he will enter Paradise. They are easy but those who do them are few. Glorify Allah (by saying SubhanAllah) after every prayer ten times, praise Him (by saying Alhamdu Lillah) ten times, and magnify Him (by saying Allahu akbar) ten times. That is one hundred and fifty on the lips, and one thousand five hundred in the balance. When you go to your bed, glorify Him, magnify Him and praise Him one hundred times. That is one hundred on the lips and one thousand in the balance. Who among you could do two thousand five hundred bad deeds in one day and night?»**

## What we learn from the hadith

**1**

It is affirmed that good deeds and bad deeds are written down when they happen, along with the reward and punishment for them. The good deeds that happen and the bad deeds that happen have already been decreed and cannot be changed.

**The multiplication of reward for good deeds may be based on the time when they are done, such as the reward for righteous deeds in the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah.**

**Or it may be based on the place in which they are done, such as prayer in al-Masjid al-Haram (in Makkah).**

**Or it may be based on the type of deed, so obligatory deeds are superior to supererogatory and voluntary deeds.**

**Or it may be based on the doer, such as the superiority of the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم over those who came after them.**

**The reward for deeds may also vary depending on the level of one's sincerity towards Allah عز وجل and the extent to which one follows the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم.**

Deciding to do a bad deed in Makkah incurs a punishment, even if one decides on that when one is outside the city. Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said: No one ever decides to do a bad deed then ends up not doing it but it will not be recorded against him, but if he decides to kill someone at the Kaaba when he is in Aden, Allah will cause him to taste a painful punishment. Ad-Dahhak said: A man may decide to commit a sin in Makkah when he is in another land, then ends up not doing it, but it is still recorded against him. Allah عز وجل says: *{and [also] whoever intends [a deed] therein of deviation [in religion] or wrongdoing - We will make him taste of a painful punishment}* [al-Hajj 22:25].

**2**

If someone decides to do a bad deed but ends up not doing it, Allah will record it for him as one complete good deed. If he decides to do it and then does it, Allah will record it as a single bad deed. But bad deeds include both major sins and minor sins, just as good deeds include both obligatory and voluntary actions, and each type comes under its own ruling and has its own reward, as appropriate.

If a person intends to do evil, and takes measures that lead to that but fails to do the deed, then the sin of the one who does that evil deed will be recorded against him, as was narrated concerning two Muslims who fight one another with swords: **«If two Muslims meet and fight with their swords, then both the killer and the one who was killed will be in the Fire.»** They said: O Messenger of Allah, with regard to the killer [it is clear], but what about the one who was killed? He said: **«Because he wanted to kill his brother.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

## Activities

1. **What are the guidelines with regard to Allah's decreeing of things?**

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2. **On what bases may the reward for good deeds with Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ be multiplied?**

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3. **Some people regard it as permissible to commit sin because of what Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has already decreed, that bad deeds should happen. How would you respond to these people?**

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4. **What is the ruling on deciding to do a bad deed in places that are regarded as holy according to Islamic teachings? Give evidence for what you say.**

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.....

# HADITH 8

It was narrated from Hakeem ibn Hizam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever strives to maintain his dignity, Allah will help him to maintain his dignity; whoever refrains from asking of people, Allah will make him independent of means; whoever strives to be patient, Allah will help him to be patient.»** Agreed upon. In [Sahih] Muslim it is narrated from Abu Saeed al-Khudri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: **«No one is ever given any gift better and more expansive than patience.»**

## Narrator of the hadith

**Hakeem ibn Hizam ibn Khuwaylid al-Qurashi.** Hakeem was born inside the Kaaba. He lived for one hundred and twenty years, sixty years in Jahiliyyah and sixty years in Islam. He died in 45 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«strives to maintain his dignity»** – this refers to refraining from asking of people and refraining from haram actions.

**«Allah will help him to maintain his dignity»** that is, He will reward him for his refraining from asking of others by meeting his needs and helping him to maintain his dignity. It was said: Either He will grant him provision and wealth that will make him independent of means so that he has no need to ask of others, or He will bless him with contentment.

**«whoever refrains from asking of people»** that is, he appears to be independent of means because he shows no interest in the wealth of other people, and he refrains from asking, so that one who is unaware of his situation would think that he is independent of means, because he refrains from asking.

**«Allah will make him independent of means»** that is, He will make him feel that he has no need of people.

Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ praises those who refrain from asking of others, as He says: *{[Charity is] for the poor who have been restricted for the cause of Allah , unable to move about in the land. An ignorant [person] would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint, but you will know them by their [characteristic] sign. They do not ask people persistently [or at all]}* [al-Baqarah 2:273].

**«whoever strives to be patient»** that is, he acts in a patient manner and puts up with the bitterness of patience. Patience (sabr) means restraining oneself from everything that Allah disapproves of and does not like, of beliefs, words and deeds.

**«Allah will help him to be patient»** that is, He will strengthen him and enable him to control his nafs (self).

**This hadith includes four concise pieces of advice:**

1. The words **«Whoever strives to maintain his dignity, Allah will help him to maintain his dignity.»**
2. The words **«whoever refrains from asking of people, Allah will make him independent of means.»**

These two ideas are interconnected. Perfection can only be attained through sincerity to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, hoping for His reward, fearing His punishment, and feeling attached to Him, to the exclusion of all created things. So the individual must strive to attain this perfection, taking all measures that will help him to achieve that, until he is truly a slave of Allah, free of enslavement to people.

**This requires him to strive to avert his nafs (self) from two things:**

**The first** is attachment to people, which he can avoid by refraining from asking for or seeking what is in their hands. Therefore he should not seek it either explicitly or implicitly.

Then he may complete that by striving to make himself attain **the second thing**, which is seeking to become independent of means by relying on Allah and trusting Him to suffice him, for whoever relies on Allah, He will indeed suffice him.

Each of these two things reinforces and strengthens the other, so the stronger a person's attachment is to Allah, the weaker his attachment to people will be, and vice versa.

3. The words **«whoever strives to be patient, Allah will help him to be patient.»**
4. The words **«No one is ever given any gift better and more expansive than patience.»**

These two phrases indicate that whoever takes it upon himself to be patient, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will help him to attain that, and that patience is the best, most expansive and greatest gift that Allah may give a person.

Patience is the greatest of gifts because it is connected to all of a person's affairs. Every situation he may go through requires patience. He needs patience to obey and worship Allah, so that he will do it properly; he needs patience to refrain from disobeying Allah, so that he will avoid it for His sake; he needs patience to accept the decree of Allah when it is painful, so that he will not be discontent with it; he even needs patience with regard to the blessings of Allah and things that he likes, so that he will not let himself rejoice and exult in a blameworthy manner and will instead give thanks to Allah. So in all situations he needs patience, and by means of patience one may attain success.

## What we learn from the hadith

**1**

Asking people to give to you from their wealth and what Allah has given them of the comforts and pleasures of this worldly life is something that is regarded as blameworthy; rather we are encouraged to refrain from asking of people, because this is a kind of losing face which undermines a person's dignity. Therefore it is only permissible in the case of extreme need, and only to the extent that is necessary in order to have what is sufficient when one is unable to strive and work. The Prophet ﷺ said: **«A man will keep asking of people until he comes on the Day of Resurrection with not even a shred of flesh on his face.»** Agreed upon.

**2**

This hadith highlights the virtue of maintaining one's dignity, patience and refraining from asking of people, showing no interest in what people have.

**3**

Noble characteristics may be developed and attained by training oneself to practice them until they become second nature.

**4**

The Prophet ﷺ made a true promise, in the words: **«Whoever strives to maintain his dignity, Allah will help him to maintain his dignity.»** In other words, whoever seeks to maintain his dignity and not ask of anyone other than his Lord, Allah will help him to maintain his dignity and will suffice him and meet his needs.

Similarly, whoever shows patience and strives to make himself be patient, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will indeed give him patience and make him one of the patient (as-sabireen).

**5**

This hadith highlights the virtue of making oneself refrain from asking of anyone except Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Muslim narrated that Suhayb رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for his affairs are all good, and this applies to no one but the believer. If something good happens to him, he is thankful for it and that is good for him. If something bad happens to him, he bears it with patience and that is good for him.»**

The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ told us that true patience (sabr) is when the calamity first strikes. It was narrated that Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed by a woman who was weeping at a graveside and he said: **«Fear Allah and be patient.»** She said: Leave me alone! You have not been afflicted by the calamity that has befallen me! She did not recognize him, but then she was told that he was the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She came to the door of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and she did not find any doorkeepers at his door. She said: I did not recognize you. He said: **«True patience (sabr) is when the calamity first strikes.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: When calamity strikes out of the blue, it casts terror in the heart and creates alarm when it first strikes. If a person shows patience when calamity first strikes, then its impact will be reduced and its strength will be lessened, so it will become easier for him to continue with patience.

## Activities

1. **Write a few lines explaining that it is blameworthy to ask people for money for the purpose of accumulating money, and mention some guidelines concerning that.**
2. **Why is patience the greatest and most expansive gift that a person may be given?**
3. **How could this hadith form the basis for giving up bad habits?**
4. **Speak about the virtue of refraining from asking of people and being content.**

# HADITH 9

It was narrated that Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Prophet ﷺ said: **«Among the words that people learned from the earlier prophets are: 'If you feel no shame, then do as you wish.'»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Abu Mas'ud, Uqbah ibn Amr al-Ansari al-Badri.** He is called Badri because he halted at, or lived beside, a watering-place in Badr, and was well known for that. He was present at the second oath of allegiance at al-Aqabah. Ali ibn Abi Talib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ appointed him as governor of Kufah. He died in 41 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«Among the words that people learned»** that is, among the teachings that reached the people and they knew them.

**«from the earlier prophets»** that is, the laws and teachings of the (earlier) prophets that were not abrogated, because they are in harmony with common sense and reason, and hence they are matters on which all the prophets were agreed and called people to.

**«If you feel no shame»** – the word translated here as "feel no shame" comes from the root hayaa, **the linguistic meanings of which include shame**, decorum and modesty.

**In Islamic terminology,** hayaa is a characteristic which prompts one to do that which is praiseworthy and to refrain from that which is reprehensible.

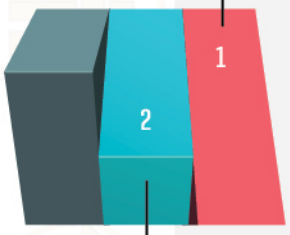
## This sentence has two meanings:

**The first meaning is:** if you feel no shame (hayaa) that prevents you from doing a reprehensible action, **«then do as you wish.»** This instruction is a warning; in other words, do as you see fit, and you will be punished for it. This is like the verse in which Allah says: *{Do whatever you will; indeed, He is Seeing of what you do}* [Fussilat 41:40]. Such a thing could only be done by those whose hayaa has been lost or reduced.

**The second meaning is:** if what you want to do is nothing to be ashamed of, **«then do as you wish.»** This instruction indicates that it is permissible; in other words, you may do whatever you do not feel ashamed of.

This hadith indicates that hayaa is something praiseworthy, as is stated in the teachings of Islam and was also stated in the teachings of previous prophets. It is one of the noble characteristics that were taught by one prophet after another, until they reached this ummah.

### Hayaa is of two types:




**The first type** is that which is an inherent characteristic and is not acquired. This is one of the noblest characteristics with which Allah may bless a person and instill in him. Hence the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Hayaa cannot lead to anything but good.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim. That is because it restrains one from committing abhorrent deeds and adopting vile characteristics, and urges one to adhere to the noblest and most sublime characteristics.

**The second type** is what one may acquire as a result of knowing Allah and recognizing how great He is and how close He is to His slaves, and that He is aware of them and He knows the stealth of the eyes and all that the hearts conceal. This is one of the most sublime characteristics of faith; in fact it is the highest level of ihsan.

The Prophet ﷺ regarded hayaa as part of faith, as it was narrated in as-Sahihayn from Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما that the Prophet ﷺ passed by a man when he was rebuking his brother for being shy by nature, saying: You are too shy! The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Let him be, for shyness (hayaa) is part of faith.»**

Al-Jarrah al-Hakami said: I refrained from sins out of shyness for forty years, then after that I attained piety.

One of the scholars said: I thought of sin as something contrary to dignity, so I refrained from sin in order to maintain my dignity, then after that I refrained out of religious commitment.

## What we learn from the hadith

1 Reports from the previous nations could survive and reach this ummah, transmitted either through revelation in the Quran, or through the Sunnah, or through what people transmit.

In the case of the Quran, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, this is in the former scriptures The scriptures of Abraham and Moses}* [al-A'la 87:18-19], In the case of the Sunnah, the Prophet ﷺ often mentioned the Children of Israel.

2

The virtue of hayaa. It is proven from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: **«Hayaa is a branch of faith.»**

Narrated by Muslim.

3

Some aspects of hayaa are connected to the rights of Allah and some are connected to the rights of people.

With regard to hayaa that is connected to the rights of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, it is essential to feel too shy before Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to let Him see you where He has forbidden you to be, or to let Him not see you where He has commanded you to be.

With regard to hayaa that is connected to the rights of people, it means refraining from anything that is contrary to dignity and decency.

**That which was transmitted from the earlier prophets (which is called the prophetic teachings of those who came before us); it may be divided into three categories:**

- **The first** category is that which Islam testifies is true. It is valid and acceptable.
- **The second** category is that which Islam testifies is false. It is invalid and is to be rejected.
- **The third** category is that concerning which Islam neither affirms nor rejects it. We refrain from judging such reports, which is only fair.

Hayaa is an entirely praiseworthy characteristic. As for that shyness which prevents you from doing what is obligatory, or causes you to fall into that which is haram, that is not hayaa; rather it is called khajal (embarrassment).

So failing to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, failing to ask about issues of knowledge, keeping quiet and not speaking the truth – all of this is weakness. It does not come under the heading of hayaa even if people claim that it is so. Hence Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: How good are the women of the Ansar, for shyness (hayaa) does not prevent them from learning about religion. Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Hayaa is one of the attributes of Allah. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ is hayiy (modest) and loves hayaa. The Prophet ﷺ said: **«Indeed Allah is modest and concealing and He loves modesty and concealment.»**

Narrated by Abu Dawud and an-Nasai; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

4

Hayaa should be second nature to the Muslim and he should adhere to it always, so that he may attain the pleasure of his Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ. The poet said:

If you do not fear the consequences And you have no shame, then do as you wish
By Allah, there is no good in living If hayaa is lost

## Activities

1. **Write an essay about the Muslim's need for hayaa, giving examples of hayaa.**

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2. **How can you develop hayaa before Allah and before people?**

.....

.....

3. **How do you understand the command in the Prophet's words, «then do as you wish»?**

.....

.....

4. **List the categories of that which was transmitted from the earlier prophets, with examples. Use other sources.**

.....

.....

## HADITH 10

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his neighbour; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his guest.»** Agreed upon.

## Explanation of phrases

**«Whoever believes…»** – This is a conditional sentence, the completion of which is, **«let him speak good or remain silent.»**

The purpose behind this phrasing is to urge and encourage people to either speak good or remain silent.

**Good is of two types:** good words and good objectives.

**Good words include** mentioning Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, glorifying and praising Him, reciting Quran, teaching knowledge, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

**As for good words** which serve a good purpose, that includes saying something permissible that is not good in and of itself, but it cheers people up. This is good because of what it results in, namely putting people at ease, comforting them, and creating harmony.

Silence is all good. It was said: The more mature in thinking a person is, the less he speaks.

It was said regarding silence: It is adornment without jewellery, gravitas without authority, a fortress without a wall.

The poet said:

I have seen words adorn a man
But remaining silent is better for the one who remained silent
How often words lead to disaster
And how often one speaks then wishes he had remained silent

**«Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his neighbour»** – this refers to the neighbour who lives in a house nearby. What appears to be the case is that it also includes one's neighbour (colleague) at work, but it is more likely to refer to the neighbour who lives in a house nearby. The closer the neighbour is to you, the greater his right over you.

## Brief explanation of the hadith

This hadith teaches us noble characteristics and sublime etiquette. When any believer wants to speak, he should think about what he wants to say, then if there is anything good in it, he should say it, otherwise he should keep silent and refrain from speaking, for everything that the son of Adam utters will be recorded against him and nothing will be to his credit except remembrance of Allah (dhikr), enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, or other words that maintain his religious wellbeing.

The hadith also instructs us to honour neighbours, because that is fulfilling the neighbour's rights, and also comes under the heading of noble characteristics that promote goodness and ward off evil. And it instructs us to honour guests, because honouring guests is part of the etiquette of Islam and is a characteristic of the prophets and the righteous.

**This hadith includes three beneficial pieces of advice: to remain silent except when one has something good to say, to honour neighbours, and to honour guests.**

## What we learn from the hadith

1

**The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions belief in Allah and belief in the Last Day in conjunction with these three things, because belief in Allah is the foundation for belief in everything else. Therefore everything that we are obliged to believe in is connected to belief in Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.**

2

**«Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent.»** This is an example of the concise speech of the Prophet ﷺ. What it means is to guard the tongue against speaking, unless one has something good to say.

3

Remaining silent all the time is not obligatory. Speech is of three types: good, evil and idle talk.

Good is what is required; evil is haram; and idle talk is that which is neither good nor evil. It is not haram to engage in idle talk, but the best is to refrain from it.

If one has a choice between remaining silent or speaking, then it is preferable to remain silent, because that is safer.

Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq رضي الله عنه would take hold of his tongue and say: This has caused me a great deal of trouble.

Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said: By Allah, besides Whom there is no god worthy of worship, there is nothing on earth more deserving of lengthy imprisonment than the tongue.

4

The neighbour's rights are among the most important and most binding upon a person. Honouring one's neighbour may be done by being kind and generous with him and ensuring that he will not cause any annoyance to his neighbour.

### Neighbours are of three types:

- A neighbour who is a Muslim and a relative. He has three rights: the rights of a neighbour, the rights of a relative, and the rights of a fellow Muslim.
- A neighbour who is a Muslim but is not a relative. He has the rights of a fellow Muslim and the rights of a neighbour.
- A neighbour who is neither a Muslim nor a relative. He has the rights of a neighbour only.

The neighbour who is most deserving of kind treatment is the one whose door is closest, because he sees what goes into his neighbour's house and he should be generous to him.

Honouring one's neighbour is a general concept concerning which reference should be made to custom. So in some cases it means going to visit him, greeting him and sitting with him, and in some cases it means inviting him to your house and honouring him, and in some cases it means giving him gifts.

Islam is a religion of harmony, closeness, upholding ties, and getting to know one another.

Honouring guests is one of the duties that Muslims have towards their fellow Muslims, and it is a noble characteristic. Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: "The guest has rights over the one whom he is visiting, and those rights are of three levels: basic rights which one is obliged to fulfil; complementary rights which one is encouraged to fulfil; and rights which come under the heading of charity." This is seen in the hadith of Abu Shurayh al-Khuza'i رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, in which it says: **«Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honour his guest by giving him what is due to him.»** It was said: What is due to him, O Messenger of Allah? He said: **«One day and one night. Hospitality may be extended to three days, and anything more than that is charity given to him.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

It is obligatory to honour guests in the way that is regarded as honouring, which means welcoming them warmly, with a cheerful face, and saying to them words that reflect that.

The guest who is to be honoured, and who has rights over the host, is the guest who is a traveller and has come from another city.

Shaykh al-Uthaymeen رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: It is obligatory to offer hospitality for one day and night to a Muslim who is coming from another city and passing through.

As for a visitor from the same city, undoubtedly offering him food and honouring him is included in the general meaning of the command to feed people and show kindness to them, but he is not the guest concerning whom the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made it obligatory to honour him, and gave him a right to the wealth of the host.

## Activities

1. In the light of your study of this hadith, explain how the Prophet ﷺ was given the power of concise speech.

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2. Speak about the virtue of silence and explain the categories of speech.

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3. Write an essay about the rights of neighbours and the obligation to honour one's neighbour.

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4. What is meant by the guest who must be honoured? Why is that?

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# HADITH 11

It was narrated from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«No one will enter Paradise in whose heart there is a particle's weight of pride.»** A man said: But a man may like his clothes to look good and his shoes to look good. He said: **«Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. Pride is rejecting the truth and looking down on people.»** Narrated by Muslim.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Abdullah ibn Mas'ud al-Hudhali,** one of the senior Sahabah in terms of virtue and wisdom. He migrated to Ethiopia twice. He was present at Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq and all other campaigns with the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He was the closest of people to him in following his teachings and in his bearing and attitude. He learned seventy surahs directly from him, with no one else present. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent him to the people of Kufah to teach them about their religion. He died in 32 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«a particle's weight»**: according to the well-known view, the word dharrah ( translated here as particle) refers to a small ant. Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said: If you put your hand on the dust then lift it up, every single thing that sticks to it of dust is a dharrah (particle).

**«of pride (kibr)» - the linguistic meaning of the word kibr** (translated here as pride) is arrogance and tyranny. **In Islamic teachings**, however, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ defined it as: **«rejecting the truth and looking down on people.»**

**«[He] loves beauty»** that is, He loves beautification, so He loves for a person to wear beautiful clothes and shoes, take care of his physical wellbeing and appearance, and introduce beauty into all his affairs.

**«rejecting the truth»** that is, scorning it and not accepting it, and thinking of it as insignificant.

**«looking down on people»** that is, despising them and thinking little of them.

It is a serious mistake to interpret the dharrah (particle) that is mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah as referring to an atom, as it is known in the terminology of chemistry. This modern terminology was not known in the language of the Arabs in which the Quran was revealed and in which the Sunnah was narrated.

This hadith carries a warning, in order to deter people from a negative characteristic. The one in whose heart there is pride may be one who is too proud to accept the religion of truth, out of resentment towards it. Such a one is a disbeliever who will abide in Hell forever and will not enter Paradise, because Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That is because they disliked what Allah revealed, so He rendered worthless their deeds}* [Muhammad 47:9] – and deeds can only be rendered worthless because of disbelief (kufr), as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says elsewhere: *{And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever - for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire, they will abide therein eternally}* [al-Baqarah 2:217].

Or the pride in his heart may take the form of arrogance towards people, meaning that he thinks that he is superior to them, but he is not too proud to worship Allah. Such a person will not enter Paradise easily, without first being punished. Rather he is deserving of punishment for his arrogance and looking down on people, then when he has been purified, he will enter Paradise.

Then the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Allah is beautiful.»** Therefore everything Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ does is beautiful and is not ugly; rather it is good, and sound minds and righteous souls find it good and appealing.

As for that physical beauty which is granted by Allah and comes from Him عَزَّوَجَلَّ, man plays no role in that and it is not something that he acquires by his efforts. Rather the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was referring to that beauty which man may acquire by his own efforts, by beautifying himself and making himself look good.

## What we learn from the hadith

**1** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is beautiful in His essence, in His deeds, and in His attributes, and He also loves beautification.

The more a person beautifies himself, the dearer he is to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, if this beautification is something that he can afford. It is not appropriate for one who is poor to go and spend excessively on beautiful clothes and beautiful shoes. But if Allah has blessed him with wealth and he beautifies himself, then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ loves to see the effect of His blessing on His slave, for He عَزَّوَجَلَّ loves both outward beauty and inner beauty.

**Outward beauty includes cleanliness in one's body,** clothing, dwelling place and so on.

**Inner beauty** includes adorning oneself with the best and most sublime characteristics.

**2** Pride is prohibited and is condemned. It is of three types:

**The first** is pride and arrogance towards Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. This is the worst and most reprehensible type of pride. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us in His Book the stories of arrogant people and what happened to them, for nothing prevented them from believing in Allah except pride, self-admiration and arrogance. They were requited with divine wrath and the worst of punishments.

**The second** type is pride and arrogance towards the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in the sense of refusing to follow him, out of arrogance, ignorance and stubbornness, as Allah tells us was the attitude of the disbelievers of Makkah and other nations.

**The third** type is pride and arrogance towards people, which means looking down on them and thinking of oneself as being superior to them. This type – even though it is less serious than the first two types – is still a grave sin, and the punishment for it is painful. Examples of this type are many, including feeling proud of one's wealth, status, beauty, strength, and large number of followers and supporters.

**3** Pride is not appropriate for a human being, because pride is one of the attributes of Lordship. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said: 'Pride is my cloak and majesty is my lower garment, and I shall throw him who competes with me regarding either of them into Hell.'»** Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

## The virtue of humility:

Humility means lowering one's wing and being gentle and kind.

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Wealth is not diminished by (giving) charity. Allah will increase in honour one who forgives; and one who displays humbleness towards another, seeking the pleasure of Allah, Allah will raise him in status.»** Narrated by Muslim.

And the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Be calm, for I am only the son of a woman of Quraysh who used to eat dried meat.»** Narrated and classed as sahih by al-Hakim.

**The word translated here as dried meat refers to** meat that is salted and dried in the sun.

## Activities

1. Explain the meaning of this phrase: «Allah is beautiful and loves beauty.» Use other sources.

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2. The phrase «No one will enter Paradise who…» often appears in Islamic texts. Explain what is meant by it.

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3. Based on this hadith, explain the seriousness of pride and arrogance.

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# HADITH 12

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Do you know what backbiting is?»** They said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: **«It is mentioning something about your brother that he does not like [to be mentioned].»** It was said: What if what I say about my brother is true? He said: **«If what you say about him is true then you have backbitten him, and if it is not true, then you have slandered him.»**

## Explanation of phrases

**«you have slandered him»** means you have said something false about him. The root meaning of the word buhtan (translated here as slander) refers to telling a lie about a person to his face, as in the verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{Those who malign believing men and believing women without them having done anything wrong will bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin}* [al-Ahzab 33:58].

**The Arabic word gheebah** (translated here as backbiting) comes from the root al-ghayb (unseen), which refers to everything that is absent from you. It is so called because the person who is spoken about is absent at the time when others speak of him.

**In Islamic terminology,** gheebah (backbiting) refers to saying about a person in his absence something that he dislikes.

Ibn Katheer said: **Backbiting** is prohibited according to scholarly consensus, and no exception is made from that except in cases where it serves a clear purpose, such as evaluating narrators of hadith and offering advice.

This hadith describes the reality of backbiting, which is speaking ill of a person in his absence, even if it is true.

An-Nawawi said: It refers to saying about a person something that he dislikes, whether it has to do with his body, his religious commitment, his worldly affairs, his character, his manners, his wealth, his father, his child, his spouse, his servants, the way he moves, his cheerful attitude, his grumpiness, or anything else having to do with him that is spoken of in negative terms, whether it is mentioned in words or by means of a wink or gesture.

And he رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: That includes saying something implicit, as some authors do, such as when they say, "Someone who claims to have knowledge said…" or, "Some of those who are thought to be righteous said… " and other such phrases in which the listener knows who is meant by that. It also includes their saying, when mentioning someone, "May Allah keep us safe and sound; may Allah forgive us; we ask Allah to keep us safe and sound," and so on. All of that comes under the heading of backbiting.

Ibn Taymiyyah said: Some of them may backbite in the form of expressing astonishment, such as saying: I wonder about So and So, why does he not do such and such?

## What we learn from the hadith

1

**It is haram to impugn the honour of a Muslim** by backbiting about him. This is a major sin, which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has condemned in His Book, mentioning it in the worst of terms to highlight how abhorrent it is, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And do not … backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah}* [al-Hujurat 49:12].

It was narrated that Anas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«When I was taken up to heaven, I passed by some people who had nails of copper with which they were scratching their faces and chests. I said: 'Who are these people, O Jibreel?' He said: 'They are the ones who used to eat people's flesh and cast aspersions on their honour and reputation.'»** Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

It was narrated that Aisha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: I said to the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: It is enough for you in Safiyah that she is such and such – meaning that she was short. He said: **«You have said a word which, if it were to be mixed with the water of the sea, it would overwhelm it»** – that is, change it and spoil it. Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

2

The Prophet ﷺ defined **backbiting** as **«mentioning something about your brother in his absence that he does not like [to be mentioned].»** If it is said in his presence, then it is an insult but is not backbiting, because he is present and is able to defend himself.

3

Backbiting means saying something about your brother that he dislikes, whether it has to do with his religious commitment, **his character or his physical appearance. Backbiting includes that which he dislikes of physical defects, character flaws and flaws in his religious commitment**.

Examples of physical defects include your saying that he is lame, one-eyed, tall, short and so on, when he dislikes that, or you say that by way of criticizing him. This is what backbiting is.

**Examples of character** flaws include your saying that he is not chaste, he pursues women and looks at them, and so on.

**Examples of flaws** in religious commitment include your saying that he is an innovator, or that he does not pray in congregation, or that he does not usually pray Fajr on time, and so on.

4

The degree of backbiting varies depending on the outcome. Backbiting the scholars is worse than backbiting others, because backbiting the scholars includes casting aspersions on their character and on what they have of Islamic knowledge, because if the esteem in which a scholar is held by the people is undermined, they will not accept anything from him.

5

If you find out about a flaw in your brother and spread news of it, and you seek out his faults, then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will cause someone to expose you, so he will seek out your faults, whether you are alive or dead, because the Prophet ﷺ said: **«O you who have paid lip service to Islam, while faith has not reached your hearts! Do not offend the Muslims, or shame them, or seek out their faults. For whoever seeks out the faults of his Muslim brother, Allah will seek out his faults, and if Allah seeks out a person's faults, He will expose him even if he is in the innermost part of his house.»** Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

6 It is permissible to backbite a non-Muslim. Ibn al-Mundhir said: This hadith indicates that in the case of one who is not a brother (in faith), such as a Jew or Christian or follower of any other religion, or one whose innovation (bidah) has put him outside the bounds of Islam, there is no backbiting in his case.

7 By referring to the other person as a brother (in faith), this is urging the backbiter to stop backbiting, because if the other person is a brother to him, it is more appropriate to show compassion to him, overlook his shortcomings and try to find excuses for his faults, not to spread them and talk about them.

8 The Prophet's words **«that he does not like [to be mentioned]»** gives the impression that if he does not dislike the mention of what he is criticized for, as in the case of promiscuous people, then this is not backbiting.

### An-Nawawi said: Chapter explaining what is permissible of backbiting:

It should be understood that backbiting is permissible if it serves a valid shar'i purpose that cannot be achieved in any other way. There are six such cases:

1. To complain about wrongdoing and mistreatment. It is permissible for the one who has been wronged to complain to the authorities and the qadi, and to say: So and So has wronged me by doing such and such.
2. To seek help in changing evil and bringing a sinner back to the straight path. So one may say to someone who has the power to change it: So and So is doing such and such; go and try to stop him.
3. Seeking a fatwa. So one may say to the mufti: My father (or my brother, or my husband, or So and So) has wronged me by doing such and such.
4. Warning the Muslims against evil and advising them. This may take several forms, including criticizing untrustworthy narrators and witnesses. This is permissible according to the consensus of the Muslims, and may in fact be obligatory, because there is a need for it.
5. In cases where someone is openly committing evil or innovation, such as one who openly drinks alcohol, one who openly confiscates people's property, one who collects protection money, taking people's money unjustly, then it is permissible to mention what he is doing openly.
6. Identification. If a person is known by a nickname based on a physical difference, such as being rheumy-eyed, lame, deaf, blind or cross-eyed, that is permissible.

These six reasons were mentioned by the scholars, and in most cases there is consensus on them. The evidence for them in the sahih hadiths is well known, and includes the following:

It was narrated from Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that a man asked permission to enter and speak to the Prophet ﷺ, and he said: **«Let him in, what a bad man he is.»** Agreed upon.

It was narrated from her رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that she said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«I do not think that So and So and So and So – two of the hypocrites – know anything about our religion.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

It was narrated that Fatima bint Qays رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: I came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: Abu'l-Jahm and Muawiyah have both proposed marriage to me. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«As for Muawiyah, he is destitute – meaning poor – and has no wealth, and as for Abu'l-Jahm, his stick never leaves his shoulder.»** Agreed upon.

It was narrated that Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to the Prophet ﷺ: Abu Sufyan is a stingy man, and he does not give me enough to suffice me and my children, unless I take it from him without his knowledge. He said: **«Take enough to suffice you and your children on a reasonable basis.»** Agreed upon.

One of the scholars summed that up in two lines of verse: Criticism is not backbiting in six cases: One who complains of wrongdoing, one who identifies another person, one who warns against someone, speaking of one who commits evil openly, seeking a fatwa, and seeking help to remove an evil.

## Activities

1. **What is the guideline on the forbidden kind of backbiting? Explain the seriousness of backbiting the scholars.**
2. **The scholars excluded some cases from backbiting. What is the reason for this exception? Use other sources.**
3. **Write about the seriousness of seeking out the faults of other Muslims, and what is required of the Muslim with regard to that.**
4. **Explain how this hadith is an example of the concise speech of the Prophet ﷺ.**

# HADITH 13

It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said: The Prophet ﷺ said: **«There is no envy except in two cases: a man to whom Allah has given wealth and he is enabled to spend it [all] appropriately, and a man to whom Allah has given wisdom and he judges in accordance with it and teaches it to others.»** Agreed upon.

## Explanation of phrases

**«There is no envy [hasad]»** – in linguistic terms, the word hasad (translated here as envy) means that the envier wishes for the removal of the blessing that the one who is envied has. The meaning of this word in Islamic terminology is broader than the linguistic meaning.

What is meant here is positive envy (hasad al-ghibtah), which means seeing a blessing that someone else has and wishing for the same for oneself, without wishing that it be taken away from that person. This is permissible and is praiseworthy.

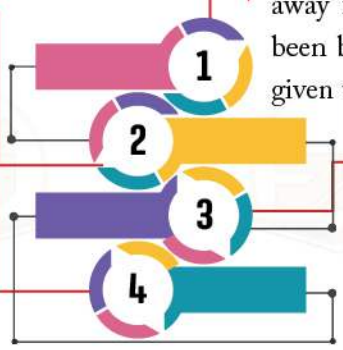
**«and he is enabled to spend it [all] appropriately»** that is, he is enabled to overcome his stinginess and spend his wealth on good causes.

The word translated here as spend conveys the meaning of spending it all, which indicates that there is nothing left of it.

That spending is qualified by describing it as being spent "appropriately" – that is, on acts of obedience – as opposed to squandering it in blameworthy ways.

**«wisdom»** that is, knowledge which removes ignorance and deters one from committing reprehensible deeds.

### The levels of hasad (envy) are four:




1. Wishing for the blessing to be taken away from the one on whom it has been bestowed, even if it is not then given to the envier.
2. Wishing for the blessing to be removed from the one on whom it has been bestowed, and given to the envier.
3. Wishing for the envier to be given a blessing similar to that which has been bestowed on the other person, so that there will be no difference between them, and if he cannot have it, the envier wishes that it be taken away from the one on whom it has been bestowed.
4. Positive envy (hasad al-ghibtah), which is not envy (hasad) in a literal sense. This means wishing to be given a blessing similar to that which has been bestowed on the other person, without it being taken away from him. This is what is mentioned in this hadith.

## This hadith indicates that envy is of two types:

**The first** is a type that is prohibited and blameworthy in all cases, because it is resenting a blessing – spiritual or worldly – that Allah has bestowed upon someone, and wishing that it be taken away. This type is the envy that consumes good deeds as fire consumes wood, and it is blameworthy in all cases. The envious person is objecting to the will and decree of Allah, objecting to His wisdom, and showing poor etiquette in thinking that this person does not deserve this blessing, and that someone else is more deserving of it.

The poet said:

Say to the one who envies me
Do you know to whom you are showing poor etiquette
You are showing poor etiquette to Allah by objecting to what He has done
Because you are not pleased with what He has given me

**The second** is not wishing for the blessing of Allah to be taken away from the other person, but wishing to be given something similar to it, or better than it or less than it. This comes under the heading of wishing for good, so if one strives and works to attain it, that is something very good for which he is striving.

## Those who are to be envied most (in the positive sense):

1. One who has wealth which he accumulated from lawful sources, then was enabled and guided to spend it in good ways and in fulfilment of duties, both obligatory and encouraged.

2. One who has knowledge and wisdom which Allah granted him, and he was enabled to teach others and judge between people.

## What we learn from the hadith

The forbidden kind of envy is a major sin, because it is objecting to what Allah has blessed someone else with, be it knowledge, wealth, children and so on, and wishing for that to be taken away from him. This is one of the characteristics of the People of the Book, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Many of the People of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves}* [al-Baqarah 2:109].

**1**

Envy (hasad) is not allowed according to Islamic teachings; the word hasad in this hadith is not meant in a literal sense.

Ibn Abd al-Barr said: It is as if the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: "There should be no envy, rather envy should only be in the case of one who recites the Quran and adheres to its teachings night and day, and one spends his wealth in appropriate ways, and teaches his people knowledge."

**2**

This hadith highlights the virtue of having knowledge and acting in accordance with it, and urges us to seek wealth in the ways that are permissible and prescribed, and to spend it on good causes.

**3**

### With regard to wisdom, people may be divided into four categories:

- Those to whom Allah has given wisdom, but they are stingy with it even towards themselves, so they do not benefit from it themselves and they do not do acts of obedience to Allah or refrain from disobeying Allah. Such a person is a loser – Allah forbid – and is in fact like the Jews who knew the truth but were too proud to follow it.
- Those to whom Allah has given wisdom, so they act upon it themselves, but they do not benefit others by means of it. They are better than those mentioned above, but are still falling short.
- Those to whom Allah has given wisdom, so they judge in accordance with it and act upon it themselves, and teach it to people. This is the best of the four categories.
- Those to whom Allah has not given wisdom at all, so they are ignorant. They have been deprived of much good, but their situation is better than that of those who were given wisdom but did not act in accordance with it, because in this case there is the hope for these people, if they have the opportunity, they will learn wisdom and act upon it, unlike those to whom Allah gave knowledge, but their deeds led them to doom– Allah forbid.

## Activities

1. Give a definition of ghibtah and hasad, explaining the difference between them and giving evidence for what you say.

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2. Which of the categories of hasad is worst? Explain how blameworthy this category of hasad is, based on shar'i evidence.

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3. You have learned that positive envy (ghibtah) is appropriate in only two cases. What is the reason for praising it in those two cases?

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# HADITH 14

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Look at those who are less fortunate than you, and do not look at those who are more fortunate than you, for it is more appropriate that you should not scorn the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon you.»** Agreed upon; this version was narrated by Muslim.

## Explanation of phrases

**«more appropriate»** that is, more befitting.

**«scorn»** that is, look down on.

This is a very concise hadith of great benefit, because no matter how unfortunate a person may be in this world, he will definitely find someone more unfortunate than him. So if he reflects on that, he will recognize the blessings of Allah that have reached him, to the exclusion of many of those who are less fortunate than him, and in that case, he will find himself very grateful to Allah for what He has granted him of well-being.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, who was the greatest of those who give thanks, admitted that he was unable to give sufficient thanks for the blessings of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, as he صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«I cannot praise You sufficiently; You are as You have praised Yourself.»** Narrated by Muslim.

## What we learn from the hadith

1

If a person looks at one who is more fortunate than him in this world, he will think little of the blessings that Allah has given him, and that will be a cause of resentment for him. But if he looks at one who is less fortunate than him, he will be grateful for blessings, and will show humility to Allah and praise Him. So no one should look at one who is more fortunate than him in this world, for that will only make him more interested in seeking worldly glamour, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Do not look longingly at the good things We have given some among them to enjoy, the splendour of the life of this world, so that We may test them thereby. The provision of your Lord is better and more lasting}* [Ta-Ha 20:131].

Awn ibn Abdillah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: I used to have rich friends and I always felt depressed, for I would see that their clothes were better than my clothes and their mounts were better than my mount. Then I made friends with poor people and I felt more at ease.

2

This hadith shows the Muslim how to appreciate the blessings of Allah. So in this world, he should look at those who are suffering poor health, and think of himself and what he has of physical well-being, which is the most important of all blessings, and give thanks to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

And he should look at those who have physical differences, such as blindness, deafness, or the inability to speak, and he should look at how he has been spared these disabilities, and give thanks to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Rather he should look at one who is suffering extreme poverty or crushing debt, and realize that he has been spared both of these problems, so he will give thanks to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

3

Whoever is enabled to follow this advice of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ will always be grateful, and his gratitude will increase with time. Whoever does otherwise, and looks at those who are better off than him in terms of health, wealth, provision and so on, will inevitably think little of the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon him, and he will become ungrateful and will not appreciate the blessings. When he becomes ungrateful, the blessings will be taken away from him, and troubles will accumulate for him. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.

4

As the basis of all goodness, and the essence thereof, is gratitude, the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Muadh ibn Jabal رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ: **«Indeed I love you, so do not omit to say following every obligatory prayer: Allahumma a'inni ala dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni ibadatika (O Allah, help me to remember You, give thanks to You and worship You properly)».**

Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

## 5

This hadith is a remedy for envy (hasad) and the like. Envy is haram. It was narrated from Anas ibn Malik رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Do not hate one another and do not envy one another...»** Narrated by Muslim.

# Activities

1. **Write about the impact of this hadith in helping individuals to find peace of mind and communities to find peace and harmony.**

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2. **This hadith refers to two important matters. What are they? How is that explained above?**

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3. **This hadith is one of the proofs for giving thanks for blessings. Explain that.**

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# HADITH 15

It was narrated that Musab ibn Sa'd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: Sa'd thought that he had an advantage over those less fortunate than him, but the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Are you helped and granted provision except by virtue of your weak ones?»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas al-Qurashi az-Zuhri,** one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise, and one of the first to become Muslim. He was the first one to shoot an arrow in Allah's cause, and one of the six members of the shura council. He died in 55 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**"Sa'd thought that he had an advantage over those less fortunate than him"** that is, in terms of courage, kindness and generosity. He did not think that out of arrogance, conceit or self-admiration, for he رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was above such a thing; he was one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise and he was the sixth person to enter Islam and the first to shoot an arrow in the cause of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ paid him a great compliment when he said to him during the Battle of Uhud, **«O Sa'd, shoot, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you!»** He never said this phrase mentioning both of his parents, except to Sa'd. Agreed upon.

**«by virtue of your weak ones»** that is, by virtue of their supplication, prayer and sincerity, as is mentioned in the report narrated by an-Nasai.

This hadith indicates that it is not appropriate for the Muslim to look down on those who are weak, for they are a cause of divine help and provision. That is because of their purity of heart and lack of attachment to worldly glamour. Thus it is more likely that they will be sincere in worship and their supplications will be answered.

## What we learn from the hadith

1

It is not appropriate for those who are strong and capable to think little of those who are weak and helpless, whether in matters of jihad and fighting, or in terms of seeking a livelihood and their inability to earn a living.

2

### Means by which objectives may be attained are of two types:

**The first type** is that which is tangible, namely verbal and physical strength and courage, independence of means and the ability to earn a living. This type is what most people focus on and regard it as being that which brings about victory and helps one to earn a living.

**The second type** is intangible means, which refers to the strength of one's reliance on Allah to attain both religious and worldly objectives, perfect trust in Him, turning to Him completely, and asking of Him. These things are stronger in those who are weak and helpless, for necessity and desperation force them to realize with certainty that only Allah can suffice them, grant them provision and support them, and that they are in a state of utmost helplessness and weakness, so they turn to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ with broken hearts.

3

The worship and supplication of the weak is more sincere and more humble, because their hearts are devoid of attachment to worldly glamour and their minds are clear and free of anything that could distract them from Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Thus they have one concern, so their righteous deeds are sincere and their supplications are answered.

4

The question in the Prophet's words, **«Are you helped and granted provision except by virtue of your weak ones?»**, serves to affirm this idea. In other words, help, victory and provision are sent only by the blessing and virtue of their supplication. This appears in the form of a question so as to emphasize the affirmation and to serve as a rebuke for the one who does not realize that. This was quoted as evidence by some of the fuqaha to prove that it is encouraged (mustahabb) to take the old people and children out to attend the prayer for rain (istisqa).

## Activities

1. Discuss this phrase: "Sa'd thought that he had an advantage over those less fortunate than him", explaining why the Prophet ﷺ answered him in the manner described in the hadith.

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2. This hadith refers to the concept of not relying on one's physical strength only. Explain that.

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3. List the types of means by which objectives may be attained. Which of them is strongest?

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# HADITH 16

It was narrated from Abu Musa رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«The believers are like a structure, parts of which support other parts,»** and he interlaced his fingers. Agreed upon.

## Narrator of the hadith

**Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Abdullah ibn Qays.** He came to Makkah before the Hijrah and became Muslim, then he migrated to Ethiopia. Then he came to Madinah with the people of the two ships after the conquest of Khaybar. The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ appointed him governor of Zubayd and Aden; Umar appointed him as governor of Basrah; and Uthman appointed him as governor of Kufah. He died in 44 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«The believers are like a structure»** that is, the believers – in their mutual support and help – are like a structure in coherence and harmony.

### Brief explanation of the hadith

This is an important hadith, in which the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ states that the believers are as described here, and urges them to pay attention to this concept, for they should be like brothers, showing compassion to one another, loving one another, caring for one another, with each of them loving for his brother what he loves for himself, and striving to attain that.

## What we learn from the hadith

1. This hadith highlights the fact that we should understand the importance of the rights that one Muslim has over another, and it urges us to show compassion to one another, be kind to one another and support one another in everything that is not sinful or makruh (disliked). It is obligatory for the believers to support and help one another.

2. The believers, in their mutual support and coherence, and their need to stick together, are like a tightly-fitted, solid structure that could not remain strong unless its parts are firmly connected to other parts. If it begins to crack, it will fall and collapse; in like manner, the strength of the Muslim community is based on strong connections between its parts.

3. The strength of the Muslim ummah depends on unity, mutual support and cooperation, for it is like a structure that cannot remain strong unless its parts are firmly connected. If it develops cracks, it will collapse. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Verily, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in ranks, as if they were a tightly-fitted, solid structure}* [as-Saff 61:4].

   This verse and this hadith both state that Islam aims to build a society that is coherent and tight-knit, the members of which are in harmony with one another.

### Arab nationalism:

This hadith states that the foundation of brotherhood is faith, and this is the basis of Islamic teachings. There is nothing in the religious texts at all that calls people to rally around the slogans of **Arab nationalism**. Rather that is a jahili (ignorant) notion that motivates people to be proud of being Arab and to be fanatical about it. Ahmad narrated with a hasan isnad from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Indeed Allah has taken away from you the pride of Jahiliyyah – meaning arrogance, conceit and tribalism – with its pride in forefathers. Rather there is no one but a pious believer or a doomed evildoer. All people are the sons of Adam, and Adam was created from dust.»** This is in accordance with the words of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ: *{O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you}* [al-Hujurat 49:13].

Fanatic Arabism has nothing to do with Islam at all, and it was not known except in recent times.

The poet said:

Surely man cannot be evaluated except
on the basis of his religious commitment

Islam raised Salman al-Farisi in status

So do not neglect righteousness, relying
on your lineage

And shirk brought down the Arab
nobleman Abu Lahab

## 4

It is important to make comparisons and give likenesses in order to make meanings clearer. The Prophet ﷺ **interlaced his fingers** to further clarify and explain the meaning, giving a tangible likeness of the concept. Thus there is a strong connection between the narrator saying **"and he interlaced his fingers"** and what the Prophet ﷺ meant about this ummah being interconnected and united.

## Activities

1. **Write about the causes of weakness in the Muslim ummah.**
2. **This hadith indicates that it is permissible to use different means of explaining an idea. What is the ruling on using modern technology to explain and clarify rulings?**
3. **One of the most important means of strength for the Muslims is interconnectedness and unity. Explain that, quoting from the Book of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.**
4. **Some people quote the slogan of Arab nationalism. Respond to that, based on the texts of the Quran and Sunnah.**

# HADITH 17

It was narrated from Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«No one of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.»**

Agreed upon.

**Anas ibn Malik ibn an-Nadr al-Ansari,** the servant of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ; he served him until he passed away, then he moved to Damascus, and thence to Basrah, and he died in that city. He was the last of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to die in Basrah, in 93 AH.

## Explanation of phrases

**«None of you truly believes»** that is, in the sense of perfect faith, otherwise in principle a person is a believer, even if he does not have this characteristic.

**«What he loves for himself»** that is, of doing good, in terms of words, deeds and beliefs.

Al-Qurtubi said: What this means is that no one attains complete, perfect faith until, in addition to his being Muslim, the people are safe from him, and he has goodwill towards them, and is sincere towards all of them. End quote.

## Brief explanation of the hadith

This is one of the most important hadiths that form the core of Islam. If people acted in accordance with it, it would put an end to many evils and disputes among people, and security, goodness and peace would prevail in society. This can be attained when people's hearts are free of rancour, dishonesty and envy. For envy dictates that the envier should hate to see anyone equalling him or surpassing him in any virtue or blessing, because he wants to be superior to people in his virtues, and to be unique in that regard. Faith, in contrast, dictates the opposite of that, which is that one would like all the believers to have a share of the blessings that Allah has given him, without that detracting from his share at all.

## Brief explanation of the hadith

This hadith highlights one of the great characteristics of faith, so whoever acquires that characteristic is deserving of being admitted to Paradise. Imam Ahmad narrated with a hasan isnad that Yazid ibn Asad al-Qasri رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to me: **«Do you love [to enter] Paradise?»** I said: Yes. He said: **«Then love for your brother what you love for yourself.»**

Muslim narrated from Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever would like to be saved from the Fire and enter Paradise, let him make sure that at the moment of death he believes in Allah and the Last Day, and let him treat people as he would like to be treated.»**

It was narrated that Abu Dharr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to me: **«O Abu Dharr, I see that you are weak, and I love for you what I love for myself. Do not be in a position of leadership, even over two people, and do not be in charge of an orphan's wealth.»**

Narrated by Muslim.

## What we learn from the hadith

1

It is obligatory for a Muslim to love for his brother what he loves for himself, because the negation of faith for one who does not love for his brother what he loves for himself indicates that it is obligatory to do that. Faith cannot be negated unless a person has omitted something obligatory or committed something that is contrary to faith.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: If faith is negated by omitting an action, it means that this action is obligatory.

2

The Muslim should love good for people like the good that he himself has. Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said: I read a verse in the Book of Allah and wish that all the people understood of it what I understand.

3

The Prophet's words, **«until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself»** include all righteous deeds, be they words, beliefs or actions.

4

No one can attain this characteristic and be able to behave in that manner except one who is blessed with a sound heart, that is free of rancour, dishonesty and envy. This is a call to have sound hearts and to rid them of all blameworthy characteristics.

5

It is a warning against envy, for the envier does not love for his brother what he loves for himself; rather he wishes that the blessing that Allah has bestowed be taken away from his Muslim brother.

**If people were to follow this hadith in their interactions with other Muslims, many problems would be solved.**

The one who works for someone else would work as if he were working for himself. The builder would build as if he were building for himself. The doctor would treat his patient as if he were treating his own son. The worker would work as if he were working for himself. The tailor would sew as if he were sewing for himself. The mechanic would fix the car as if he were fixing it for himself. When the butcher sold meat, it would be as if he were selling it to himself. And the same would apply to teachers, employees, researchers, carpenters, plumbers, blacksmiths, and so on.

If this hadith were truly put into practice, we would rid ourselves of rancour and poor workmanship. This hadith also motivates people to refrain from haram actions. If a person would not like someone else to steal from him, then he must not steal from his believing brother. If he does not like bribery, then he must not like to see his brother being bribed. If he does not like lying, then he must not like to see his brother telling lies. If he does not like innovation, then he must not like for his brother to fall into innovation. If he does not like to abandon prayer, then he must not like for his brother to abandon prayer… And so on.

## Activities

1. **Write a detailed essay about the negations mentioned in the texts, such as «No one of you truly believes…» Use other sources.**

.....

2. **How can we make the most of this great prophetic advice to rectify and correct many issues in Muslim communities?**

.....

3. **In the religious texts there is some level of strictness, such as negating faith or saying that someone is not one of us, and the like. How did the scholars interpret such texts?**

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# HADITH 18

It was narrated that Abu Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: It was said to the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: What do you think if a man does a good deed, and the people praise him for it? He said: **«That is immediate glad tidings for the believer.»** Narrated by Muslim.

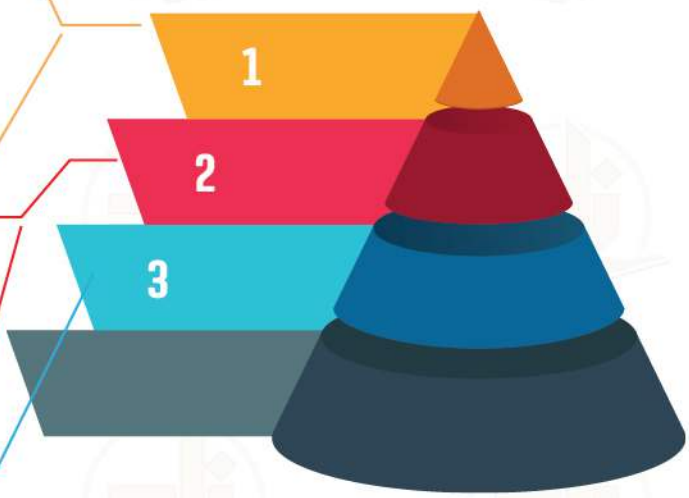
## Explanation of phrases

**«That is immediate glad tidings for the believer»** – that is, it is immediate glad tidings for the believer if he does righteous deeds sincerely for the sake of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ Alone, not hoping for anything except the pleasure of Allah, then people find out about it and praise him, so he is pleased by that and feels cheerful as a result.

In this hadith, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ spoke of the immediate good outcome of praiseworthy deeds, such as people praising the doer, without him seeking or hoping for that. This comes under the heading of glad tidings, for Allah has promised His close friends – who are the believers who are mindful of Him – glad tidings in this life and in the Hereafter of the pleasure and reward of Allah, and being saved from His wrath and punishment, at the time of death, in the grave and on the Day of Resurrection.

## What we learn from the hadith

When Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ accepts a good deed, He causes people's hearts to be inclined towards the doer and inspires them to praise him. Thus what He inspires people to do and say is glad tidings of acceptance of the deed. Similarly, when Allah loves a person, He makes him beloved to people.



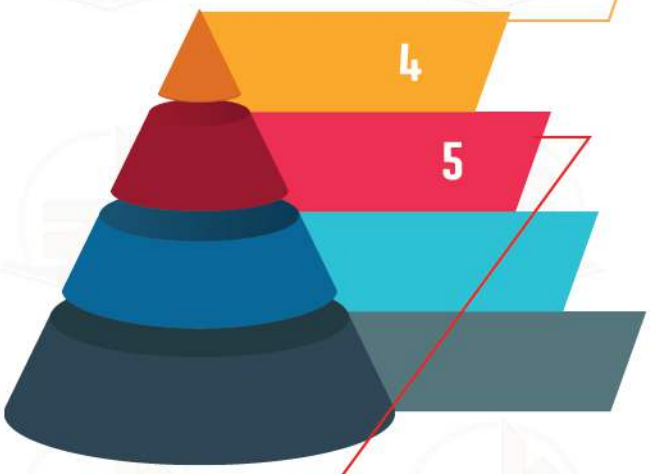

Whoever does righteous deeds sincerely for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, his sincerity cannot be undermined if Allah causes people to praise him.

**The believer may be given glad tidings in this world about his righteous deeds in several ways:**

- Allah opens his heart to doing a particular righteous deed, so he is happy to do it and feels at ease and content with it. This may be an indication that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has decreed that he is to be one of the blessed (those destined for Paradise). Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{As for he who gives and fears Allah, and believes in the best [reward], We will make easy for him the path of salvation}* [al-Layl 92:5-7].

- The righteous speak well of him; this is testimony on their part that he is one of the righteous. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people}* [al-Hajj 22:78]. When a funeral passed by, they spoke well of the deceased. The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«It is due»** – meaning Paradise. And he said to the Sahabah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ: **«You are the witnesses of Allah on earth.»** Agreed upon.

- People see that righteous person in good dreams, then come to him and tell him that they saw such and such, or he sees a good dream about himself. This is also immediate glad tidings for the believer.




**The believer will be given the glad tidings about the Hereafter**, which is the greatest glad tidings. The first glad tidings come at the time of death, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul, return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him] and enter among My [righteous] servants, and enter My Paradise"}* [al-Fajr 89:27-30].

The angels of the Most Gracious will come down to the believers with mercy and glad tidings. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Verily, those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast, to them the angels will come down [at the time of death, saying]: Fear not, nor grieve; but receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you were promised}* [Fussilat 41:30].

They will have glad tidings on the Day of Resurrection. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[it will be said], "Your good tidings today are [of] gardens beneath which rivers flow"}* [al-Hadeed 57:12].

The difference between the believer who is given these glad tidings and the one who shows off is that the show-off only does deeds so that people will see him. Thus there is shirk (association of others with Allah) in his intention from the outset, whereas in the case of the believer, his intention is sincerely for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ Alone, and it never occurs to him that people will praise him or criticize him. But then people find out about his deeds, without him intending that, and they praise him for it.

## Activities

1. **Speak about showing off and its impact. What is the difference between that and what is mentioned in the hadith?**
2. **Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:** *{Say, "We have believed in Allah and in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Descendants, and in what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [submitting] to Him." And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers}* [Aal Imran 3:84-85]. **What is the connection between this passage and the hadith under discussion here?**
3. **How may a person be given glad tidings for his righteous deeds in this world?**

## HADITH 19

It was narrated that Aisha رضي الله عنها said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Aim to do good and be moderate, and be of good cheer, for no one will ever enter Paradise by virtue of his deeds.»** They said: Not even you, O Messenger of Allah? He said: **«Not even me, unless Allah envelops me in His mercy.»** Agreed upon.

## Explanation of phrases

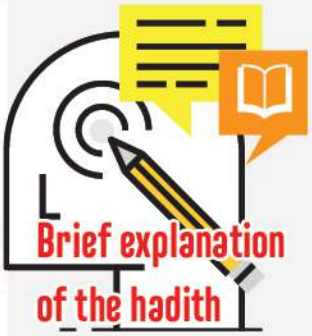
**«Aim to do good»** - that is, aim to do what is right, by doing acts of worship, without going to extremes or falling short. The root meaning of the word translated here as aim to do good refers to aiming an arrow, when it hits the target and does not miss it.

**«be moderate»** that is, do not exhaust yourselves in worship, lest that lead to you tiring and giving up striving, and then becoming negligent.

**«And be of good cheer»** – that is, when you have done what you were commanded to do of following the straight path, then be of good cheer and hope for great reward.

**«unless Allah envelops me in His mercy»** that is, unless He surrounds me with it. The word translated here as envelop comes from a root word that refers to putting a sword in a sheath, which then envelops it and covers it.

**«By virtue of his deeds»**– a person cannot attain admittance to Paradise and enjoyment of its delights by virtue of his deeds alone; rather that is by the grace and kindness of Allah, for it is He Who enables a person to do righteous deeds, helps him to do them, blesses him with acceptance of his deeds, and rewards him for them. So it is due to His grace and mercy, before and after the individual's efforts.




This hadith indicates that remaining steadfast should be in accordance with one's ability. It is a command to be keen to ensure that one's deeds are in accordance with the truth as much as possible, for no matter how great a person's mindfulness of Allah is, he will inevitably make mistakes, as it was narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Every son of Adam is prone to error, and the best of those who err are those who constantly repent.»** Narrated by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani. And he ﷺ said: **«By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if you did not sin, Allah would take you away and bring other people who would sin, then ask Allah for forgiveness, then He would forgive them.»** Narrated by Muslim.

And no one will ever be saved from the Fire by virtue of his deeds alone. That is because deeds alone will never reach the level of gratitude that is due to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ or fulfil the rights that Allah has over His slaves. But Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will envelop His slave in His mercy and forgive him. Even the Prophet ﷺ will never be saved by virtue of his deeds alone, unless Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ envelops him in His mercy.

This indicates that no matter how high a status a person attains and how close he becomes to Allah, he will never be saved by virtue of his deeds alone, for without the blessing of Allah his deeds will never save him. So it is the grace and mercy of Allah that will bring admittance to Paradise; they are what will enable a person to reach Paradise and save him from the Fire.

## What we learn from the hadith

1 The Muslim should be moderate in all his affairs, which means following a middle path between going to extremes and being negligent. That is because falling short in doing what is required or going to extremes in doing it will cause a person to drift away from the right path. Moderation in all things is the way of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in purifying oneself, prayer, fasting, manners and so on.

2 The Muslim should be moderate and not go to extremes in worship, because exhausting himself in worship will lead to becoming tired, and then giving it up.

3 The individual should not admire his deeds. Whatever he does of righteous deeds, his effort is still very little in comparison to the rights that Allah has over him.

4 This and similar hadiths indicate that no one deserves reward and Paradise by virtue of his deeds alone.

With regard to the verse *{Enter Paradise for what you used to do}* [an-Nahl 16:32], it does not contradict these hadiths. Rather what this verse means is that admittance to Paradise is granted because of deeds which one was enabled to do and guided to be sincere when doing them, then they were accepted by the mercy and grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Thus it is valid to say that he was not admitted because of his deeds alone, which is what the hadiths say, and it is also valid to say that he was admitted by virtue of his deeds – that is, because of them. So what is meant in the hadith is that it was not in return for his deeds, and what is meant in the verse is that it was by virtue of his deeds.

## Activities

1. **No one deserves reward and Paradise because of his deeds alone. Explain this phrase, based on your studies.**
2. **Very briefly, explain how you could reconcile between what it says in the hadith, that righteous deeds will not admit a person to Paradise, and the verses which affirm that righteous deeds will be the cause of admittance to Paradise.**
3. **Explain how this hadith is an example of the Prophet's concise speech.**

# HADITH 20

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«The believer is not stung from the same hole twice.»** Agreed upon.

## Explanation of phrases

**«The believer is not stung from the same hole twice»** – what is meant is that the praiseworthy and perfect believer is the one whose knowledge and experience have made him aware of the subtleties of issues, to the extent that he can assess what may happen and take precautions. As for the reckless believer, he may be stung many times.

One of the scholars said: This hadith appears in the form of a statement, but what is meant is a command or instruction. In other words, let the believer be prudent and cautious, so that he will not be caught out from an unexpected direction, and thus be deceived time after time.

**The reason for this hadith** is that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ captured the poet Azzah on the day of Badr, then released him out of kindness, and the poet promised that he would not incite others against him or lampoon him. So he let him go, and the poet joined his people, then he resumed inciting people against the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and lampooning him. Then he captured him again on the day of Uhud. Azzah asked him to let him go, but the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«The believer is not stung from the same hole twice.»** And he said to him: **«By Allah, I will not let you go around Makkah telling people, 'I made a mockery of Muhammad twice.'»** Then he issued orders that he be executed.

This hadith indicates that the believer is intelligent and smart, and that he should be prudent and cautious, so that he will not be caught out from a direction of which he is unaware, and thus be deceived time after time. This may have to do with both religious and worldly matters, but it is more important to be cautious with regard to religious matters.

## What we learn from the hadith

1. This is a likeness that the Prophet ﷺ gave to explain how the believer should be very cautious and alert.

2. The believer should be cautious in all his affairs, and not allow anyone to deceive him twice. That includes matters that may harm his religious or worldly affairs.

3. The believer is urged to be decisive and smart in all his affairs. One of the requirements of that is knowing the measures that may lead to benefit and taking such measures, and the measures that may lead to harm and avoiding them.

4. Just as this alertness is required in matters of this world, it is also required in matters having to do with the Hereafter. So if the believer sins, he should feel pain in his heart like a sting, and not commit that sin again. This is an example of the concise speech of the Prophet ﷺ.

5. Allah has warned the believers against going back to that which the Shaytan makes fair-seeming to them of falling into sin, as He says: *{Allah warns you against returning to the likes of this [conduct], ever, if you should be believers}* [an-Nur 24:17].

Hence the repentant person who has fallen into evil should hate it more, and be more cautious and more careful to avoid it, because he knows from experience how bad its impact is.

## Activities

1. Is this hadith regarded as an example of the concise speech of the Prophet ﷺ? Explain that.

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2. Does this hadith criticize heedlessness and lack of alertness? Is alertness part of perfecting faith? Use other sources.

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3. How could this hadith be used to encourage people to repent and not go back to sin?

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- *Al-Ifsah 'an Ma'ani as-Sihah.* **Muhammad ibn Hubayrah ad-Dhuhali ash-Shaybani.**
- *Ikmal al-Mu'allim bi Fawa'id Muslim.* **Al-Qadi Iyad ibn Musa al-Yahsubi.**
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**And Allah is the Source of strength.**

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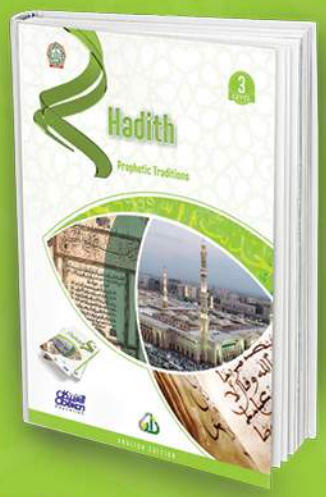


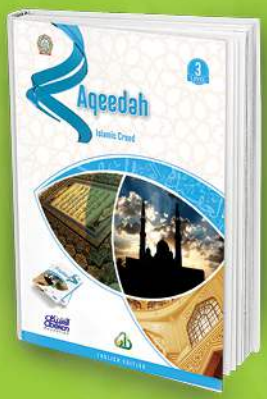


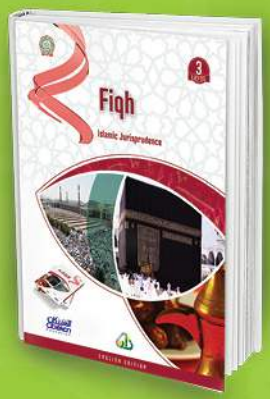


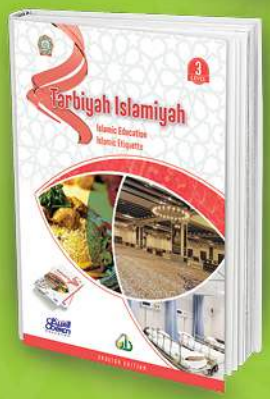

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